



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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Poor pesticide record-keeping practices prompt fines from Agriculture Department

OLYMPIA –During the second quarter of 2006, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) issued fines totaling \$1,550 against businesses that violated state pesticide laws and rules. Fines ranged from \$200 to \$750 for violations that included distributing unregistered pesticides, failing to submit pesticide application records, and operating a commercial pesticide application business without a valid license.

Actions taken involved cases investigated in Lewis, King and Yakima counties:

Kaija's Feed and Seed, Chehalis, was fined \$200 for distributing pesticides that were not registered in the state of Washington.

ProGrass Inc., Woodinville. WSDA alleged that the pesticide application records of ProGrass Inc. were not complete or readily accessible for inspection. WSDA also alleged that ProGrass Inc. was operating without a valid commercial pesticide applicator license. The matter was resolved when ProGrass Inc. agreed to pay \$750.

Union Gap Irrigation District, Wapato, was fined \$600 for failing to submit pesticide application records as requested by WSDA.

WSDA registers about 11,000 pesticide products and issues about 25,000 pesticide licenses. About 200 allegations of improper distribution or misuse of pesticides, record-keeping violations, or faulty structural inspections are investigated each year.

A penalty matrix is used to ensure penalties are uniform and fair. The matrix takes into account the seriousness of the violation, whether it is a first or a repeat offense, and whether there are any aggravating or mitigating factors involved. Larger penalties often reflect repeat offenses or multiple violations within the same incident.

WSDA enforces state and federal laws to protect people, property and the environment against the improper use of pesticides. Staff also provides technical assistance to the pesticide industry and consumers, and enforces the rules on structural inspections for wood destroying organisms, such as wood rot, carpenter ants, or termites.

To file a complaint involving the misuse of a pesticide, or to find out if a pesticide applicator or structural pest inspector is licensed, call (877) 301-4555.

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